

## Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team

May 5, 2016

### Meeting Minutes

**Appointees Present:** Anjelita (Angie) Cadena, Barton Duffy, Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell, Chasz Parker, Mayor Chris Watts, Cynthia Harris, Isabel Rodriguez, Kathy Srokosz, Councilwoman Keely Briggs, Roy Metzler, Sherri McDade, Stephen Coffey, Mayor Thomas Muir, Councilman TJ Gilmore and Valerie Foster

**Ex officios present:** Gary Henderson, Dani Shaw, Courtney Cross

**Guests Present:** Pat Smith, John Cabrales, Teddy Yan, Lacrica Olson

**Appointees Absent:** Alice Mankoff, Sandra Robinson, Terry Widmer

Meeting called to order at 8:01 a.m.

#### **Welcome & Introductions:**

Mayor Chris Watts provided the welcome and invited members and guests to introduce themselves.

#### **Purpose and Role of the Leadership Team:**

Mayor Watts invited Dani Shaw to give an overview of the homelessness task force he convened in 2014. Dani explained the temporary nature of the Mayor's Housing the Homeless Task Force (MHHTF), and walked through the work and recommendations of the task force. Dani presented the MHHTF Housing Map, which details the current availability of shelter/housing and services for homeless and at-risk individuals and families in Denton. Dani mentioned recent funding cuts the federal government is making to transitional housing programs and the effect this is having and will continue to have on the local community. Sherri McDade brought up the lack of landlords who will accept Section 8 vouchers throughout Denton County.

Included in the MHHTF recommendations was the addition of a coordinator position to support and facilitate various homelessness and housing efforts and organizations within the City of Denton. Dani explained the resulting public private partnership between the city and the United Way of Denton County (UWDC) in the hiring of Courtney Cross, Community Impact Coordinator for Homelessness Initiatives.

Mayor Watts discussed his intention to launch the Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team (DCHLT) along with UWDC in an effort the scale the work of the MHHTF up from a city to a county-wide initiative, and his reason for inviting appointees from various organizations and entities throughout Denton County. He outlined the goal of the team to operate as a policy-making body working to support and secure resources for a county-wide system to address the lack of affordable housing and supportive services for homeless and at-risk individuals and families. Mayor Watts

### **Collective Impact and Role of Backbone Organization:**

Mayor Watts invited Gary Henderson to share the collective impact approach and methodology of the DCHLT. Gary stated that there is no other group besides the DCHLT acting as a quasi-governmental body working to address the need for affordable housing in Denton County.

The team viewed a two-minute video that explains the collective impact approach and its success in uniting communities around common goals in order to achieve change worldwide. Following the video, Gary discussed the need to bring organizations together, out of their silos, in order to address pressing community needs and provide informed, data-driven and truly collaborative solutions. Gary emphasized the need for maintaining current, accurate data around available resources in order to identify gaps and make recommendations.

Gary explained the role of UWDC in supporting the DCHLT has a backbone organization. He walked through the six functions of a backbone organization: guide vision and strategy, support aligned activities, establish shared measurement practices, build public will, advance policy and mobilize funding.

Gary highlighted the success of the Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team (DCBHLT) as a collective-impact body in receipt of backbone support from UWDC. He mentioned that despite their individual focuses of increasing access to behavioral health services and affordable housing, the two teams will inevitably overlap in their share of work groups and research.

### **DCHLT Structure:**

Mayor Watts expressed that the DCHLT does not seek to compete with any existing organizations or bodies addressing homeless and housing needs, but the desire of the team to create a systems approach which will include and depend on a variety of efforts and expertise.

Mayor Watts directed the team to the proposed Bylaws for approval. Both the Charter and Bylaws were adapted from the DCBHLT, who spent three month drafting and developing the terms. Mayor Watts highlighted a typo on page three, and the need to change 'Behavioral Health Leadership Team' to 'Homelessness Leadership Team'.

Angie Cadena brought up the existence of 'Higher Education' on the list of appointing entities, but the lack of representation on the team, and there was discussion surrounding the need for inclusion of higher education institution housing needs and efforts.

Mayor Watts requested a motion to amend and approve the Bylaws to allow for the inclusion of Higher Education Institutions (Section 4.1), and to invite an appointee from North Central Texas College.

Motion: Councilman TJ Gilmore  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Angie Cadena



Motion Approved

Mayor Watts then directed the team to the proposed Charter. Councilman TJ Gilmore highlighted the need for consistency and the inclusion of two seats for higher education. Mayor Thomas Muir also requested an increase in the number of seats for 'Small Cities and Towns' from (1) to (1-2). Cynthia Harris inquired into the lack of supportive service entities at the leadership level. Councilman Gilmore highlighted their inclusion at the work group level, and Courtney Cross highlighted the focus of the DCHLT on housing in its initial stages.

Mayor Watts requested a motion to allow for (1-2) seats for Higher Education in the Charter, and increase the range of seats for Small Cities and Towns from (1) to (1-2).

Motion: Councilman TJ Gilmore  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Sherri McDade  
Motion Approved

Mayor Watts requested a motion to allow for (1-2) seats for Higher Education in the Bylaws (Section 6.1), and increase the range of seats for Small Cities and Towns from (1) to (1-2).

Motion: Councilman TJ Gilmore  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Sherri McDade  
Motion Approved

Mayor Watts invites DCHLT members to volunteer to participate on the Mission and Vision Ad Hoc Committee. The following members were appointed to the committee: Councilman TJ Gilmore, Councilwoman Keely Briggs, Dani Shaw, Kathy Srokosz and Mayor Thomas Muir. The committee also agreed to serve as the 2016-2017 Nominating Committee. Courtney Cross agreed to support the committee in scheduling their meeting before the next DCHLT meeting.

### **Work Group Overview:**

Lacrica Olson gave the group an overview of the purpose of work groups to inform the DCHLT in its decision making processes, and the need to keep work groups at a workable size. She outlined work of the Housing Work Group over the past year, and the function of the work group to inform both the DCHLT and DCBHLT. Lacrica walked through the Housing Work Group Charter, and the need for work group charters over all.

Dani Shaw explained the need for a Data Work Group dedicated to collecting, compiling and analyzing housing and homelessness data in order to properly inform the DCHLT in its efforts to make recommendations and bring resources into the county. The group discussed the lack of current data and the need to support efforts in clarifying existing and collect even more data in order to paint an accurate picture of the need locally. Valerie Foster mentioned the data local school districts can bring to the table in these efforts.

Courtney Cross explained the need for a Consumer Work Group, in order to directly consult with homeless and formerly homeless individuals and families as the DCHLT attempts to support and create an easily-navigated system.

**Meeting Schedule:**

Courtney Cross reviewed the meeting schedule of the team set as the second Thursday of every month from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the UWDC office (1314 Teasley Lane, Denton, TX 76205). She walked through the binders members received upon arrival, and stated that as documents are updated she will send them electronically and allow members to maintain current documents as they see fit.

Mayor Watts commissioned the team to begin thinking about goals and metrics for success for the next DCHLT meeting.

**New Business:**

No new business recorded.

**Public Comments:** No public comments were received.

The meeting adjourned by consent at 9:40 a.m.

**Next Meeting: June 9, 2016 @ 8:00 a.m.  
United Way of Denton County Office**

  
Secretary

7.14.16  
Date